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primitive Germans, though the latter advanced more rapidly in proportion with their more intimate and prior contacts with the Mediterranean world. The predilection of the Slavs for agriculture is the natural consequence of their long residence in areas well suited for its practice: the plains of the Dnieper and the Vistula—though it is also likely that the epoch of the migrations and of repeated nomad incursions from Asia interrupted to some extent the sedentary tendencies and habits which the Slavs had previously developed. The primitive plow of the Slavs prior to the migrations was at first only a forked branch with one fork lopped short and cut into a point. It was later supplemented by a pole to which draft animals could be attached and a handle by which the driver could guide its course.

The primitive Slavic village varied in type. The houses might be grouped in horseshoe arrangement around a central space or in a straight line on either side of a thoroughfare. Neither of these village types appears, however, quite as primeval as the system whereby each household occupied an isolated structure in the midst of the lands its members tilled. Stone buildings were unknown. The earliest type of house consisted of a trench dug in the ground, the sides of which were raised by walls of logs stopped with earth. The wooden roof was also coated with earth as an additional protection. The primitive Slavs also erected rude log cabins without digging into the ground. We have no data on the internal furnishings of the Slavic house before the eleventh century A.D.

The chilly climate in which they lived made furs the primitive costume of the early Slavs. Furs later became an important item of Slavic export, as is shown by the early introduction of the Slavic names for squirrel and ermine into both Latin and Greek. The male costume among the early Slavs consisted of a coarse shirt falling to the knee, with sleeves and an opening for the neck, combined with wide trousers supported at the waist by a belt of rope or leather and tied in at the ankles. For the shirt they sometimes substituted a short tunic, which might be

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291 of light material or else of coarse wool, in which case it could be worn over the shirt, and it was usually buckled or pinned at the shoulder or in front of the neck. In cold weather sheepskins or the cheaper pelts (bear, wolf) were worn for warmth. Women of the people were clad in a long shirt of rough linen or hempen fabric, often representing a mere cylinder held up by straps over the shoulders. From the waist down they also wore a double apron attached to a belt, while the upper part of the body might be encased in a coarse woolen jacket, along with a cloak of similar material around the neck and shoulders. Footwear consisted of rough leather slippers held by a thong over the ankle or of slippers made of bast fiber. Men frequently
302 wore wrapped leggings. Married women might wear a kerchief or bonnet on their heads over hair cut short, but maidens habitually went bareheaded, wearing their hair long and braided. Men also wore their hair long in the primitive period.
[177] Close shearing and shaving, where they occur, are due to foreign influences, and in general it may be said that in matters of attire the Slavs were always prompt to adopt foreign usages.

411 721 Originally a peaceful race, the primitive Slavs were unskilled in the use of weapons. When they were first noticed by foreign writers they had no offensive equipment except bows and spears, and were unprotected by even the most elementary shields. It has already been noted that in the Slavic vocabulary the words for helmet and sword were taken over from the Goths. In the succeeding centuries, the constant warfare of the migratory epoch and the necessity of defense against successive nomad incursions produced a marked amplification of Slavic military equipment representing a fusion of borrowed alien techniques so that when the southern Slavs invaded Greece at the end of he sixth century, their soldier was considered to be as good a fighter as the Byzantine regular. The Slavs, however, used no mounted troops until well into the historical period.

439 443 The Slavs were drawn very early into the orbit of European commerce, which in the peripheral areas of European antiq-